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SPECIAL REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL CONCERNING THE
UNITED NATIONS INTERIM FORCE IN LEBANON

The Commander of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), Major-General E. A. Erskine, has submitted the following report concerning an incursion of troops of the Israel Defence Force (IDF) into the UNIFIL area of operation manned by the Irish battalion in the vicinity of Shaqra.

1. On 9 May 1979, at approximately 0640 hours GMT, two IDF platoons and two armoured personnel carriers (APCs) entered the village of Shaqra. OP Mar had earlier observed IDF troops moving into Lebanon through border pillar 33, about two kilometres north of the village of Ramin. The initial Israeli group was soon increased to about one company strength.
2. At 0710 hours GMT, the Irish battalion moved two platoons plus two APCs to reinforce its unit at Shaqra.
3. At 0720 hours GMT, IDF increased its force to two companies strength, reinforced later with approximately 20 tanks, 37 jeeps, 8 APCs and 3 half-tracks. One company was deployed at Shaqra village and another one was poised outside the village. Subsequently, most of the IDF force was located between Shaqra and Houle to the east.
4. Upon learning of the Israeli incursion, UNIFIL lodged a strong protest with the Israeli authorities. At 0733 hours GMT, UNIFIL Headquarters received a message from the IDF Liaison Officer at Tiberias, to the effect that the Israeli forces would not open fire unless the Irish battalion fired at them.
5. A reserve force from the Dutch, Nigerian and Senegalese battalions was put under the command of the Irish battalion and was instructed to move to Tibnin. This force was later redeployed in Brashit.
6. At 0812 hours GMT, de facto forces appeared on the scene. Major Haddad, accompanied by two senior IDF officers, arrived at C Company Headquarters for talks with the Commanding Officer of the Irish battalion. During the negotiation with UNIFIL officers, the IDF officers made the following proposals: (a) IDF soldiers should search some houses which the Israelis suspected were occupied by armed elements and (b) IDF would agree to withdraw its troops after the search.

7. At 0939 hours GMT, IDF wanted to know if the Commander of UNIFIL agreed to the proposed search arrangements. The Force Commander refused to allow IDF soldiers to search the houses.

8. In the event, two houses were searched by soldiers of the Irish battalion. Nothing was found. IDF did not participate in the search; they remained approximately 100 metres from the houses. A request by IDF to have a third house searched was refused.

9. The party then returned to the Irish battalion company headquarters at Shaqra. Following further discussions, IDF agreed to withdraw. The last elements of the IDF force left the UNIFIL area of operation at 1215 hours GMT.

10. During the discussions mentioned above, UNIFIL made clear to IDF that a clash would be inevitable if they insisted on making further movements within the UNIFIL area of operation. Furthermore, it was stressed that the entire responsibility for any clash which might occur would rest with IDF.

11. IDF's stated motives for the operation were that terrorists had carried out a raid during the night against the Israeli village of Ramin and that IDF's mission was to punish the terrorists on the spot.
